



PHOTO PROVIDED  
Jack Fields was killed in a skiing accident

## SKIER: Man had many friends in Sisters who mourn his death

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a point of telling friends how much he really loved and appreciated them. He inspires me and so many others to be more present, more giving, more selfless, more open to change and other perspectives. His death is a tragedy beyond my comprehension, but I do hope that it will inspire more people to be a little bit more like Jack."

## Military seeks \$21M to clean contaminated armories

PORTLAND (AP) — The Oregon Military Department is seeking \$21.6 million from the federal government to clean up toxic armories around the state.

*The Oregonian/OregonLive* reported February 15 that the money would go toward cleaning armories in Portland, Ashland, Backer City, Bend, Coos Bay, Eugene, McMinnville, Ontario, Pendleton and Salem.

# Contrary to myth, weightlifting is good for kids

By Jim Cornelius  
News Editor

"Weightlifting is bad for kids — it'll stunt their growth. And young kids don't really get stronger by lifting."

Many of us grew up with that myth looming over the barbells in the gym. And, based on current science, it is simply that: a myth. The notion seems to have grown from a study of Japanese children engaged in hard manual labor. The children were consistently shorter than average. From that, a specious conclusion was drawn that lifting heavy things at a young age stunts growth.

The *New York Times* reported that "Somewhat improbably, from that scientific finding and other similar reports, as well as from anecdotes and accreting myth, many people came

to believe 'that children and adolescents should not' practice weight-training, said Avery Faigenbaum, a professor of exercise science at the College of New Jersey. That idea retains a sturdy hold in the popular imagination."

The idea is false. So is the idea that kids don't actually get stronger from weight training.

As the *Times* reported, several long-term studies "suggest that, in fact, weight training can be not only safe for young people, it can also be beneficial, even essential."

Ryan Hudson, who coaches adult and youth lifters in Sisters, is absolutely clear about the benefits.

"Usually, they end up being really good athletes and have a good work ethic," he said.

With a national epidemic of childhood obesity, which

can have life-long consequences, Hudson believes that activities that get kids up off the couch and active in a field that also instills self-discipline and confidence has a multitude of benefits.

While Hudson, obviously, extols the virtues of lifting heavy things, it doesn't have to be about weightlifting.

"It's good to have kids move, period, whether it's with or without weights," he said.

Inactivity and a lack of strength-building activity can make a youngster vulnerable to injury — and it's not a natural state. The *New York Times* quoted Lyle Micheli, M.D., the director of sports medicine at Children's Hospital Boston and professor of orthopedic surgery at Harvard University:

"We are urban dwellers stuck in hunter-gatherer bodies. That's true for children

as well as adults. There was a time when children 'weight-trained' by carrying milk pails and helping around the farm. Now few children, even young athletes, get sufficient activity" to fully strengthen their muscles, tendons and other tissues. "If a kid sits in class or in front of a screen for hours and then you throw them out onto the soccer field or basketball court, they don't have the tissue strength to withstand the forces involved in their sports. That can contribute to injury."

Hudson is dedicated to introducing Sisters youth — who dominated last weekend's Youth Powerlifting Nationals — to the lifelong benefits of building strength. The young lifters train on Monday and Wednesday at 3:30 p.m. For more information, visit the Level 5 Facebook page or call 541-639-5300.

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